

February 20, 1980

Missouri Clean Water Commission Meeting, February 1980

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TES

Don Toensing
Compliance Branch

Michael J. Sanderson
Chief, Compliance Branch

Site	Big River Mine
ID#	MOD 961/26 899
Break	1.6
Date	2-21-80

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On February 6 and 7, 1980, I attended the Missouri Clean Water Commission Meeting in Jefferson City. The following is a summary of the topics discussed and actions taken that are related to CCR activities.

1. Enforcement Report - a list of those matters before the Attorney General's office was provided to the Commission. A copy is attached to this memo. You will note that there are no major dischargers on the list.

2. Enforcement Referrals - ten cases were recommended for referral to the Attorney General's office. The commission referred all ten cases. Ford Motor Company was the only major facility referred. The cases referred in priority order were:

Starr Farms/Tyson Foods
Ford Motor Company
Loma Linda Estates
Clearview Acres
Fenton Hills Trailer Park
Rockwood Resort
Lays Laundry
Max Krochdale Subdivision
Howard P. Restaurant
P & S Truckstop

3. Proposed Regulations - the revised regulations have been notified in response to comments received. They will be re-proposed in the State Register on March 1, 1980, and a new public hearing is scheduled for April 23, 1980 in Hannibal, Missouri. It is hoped that final action can be taken by the Commission at that time.

4. Big River - a presentation by the University of Missouri, on a mine tailings pile near Paducah, Missouri, was given to the Commission. Big River is a high-quality stream that the Department of Conservation says has been seriously damaged for about 25 miles downstream from the tailings pile. Representatives of the Department of Conservation in attendance at the meeting said that in the river this was the most serious stream degradation problem in the State.

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SUPERFUND RECORDS

DATE

SUBJECT Erosion of Lead Mine Tailings into Big River, State of Missouri

FROM Martha R Steincamp
Attorney ENFC-LEGL

TO Robert L Morby
Chief HAZM-ARHM

THRU David R Tripp
Chief, ENFC-LEGL

THRU Lou e D Jacobs
Director, ENFC

THRU David A Wagoner
Director, ARHM

Kerry

file
Let's make sure
the memo goes to
ENFC.

Attached hereto is some sketchy information on a lead mine tailing pile near the Big River in the State of Missouri. I have reviewed the facts alleged in the letter from the Missouri Department of Conservation and have decided that action could not be appropriate under the Clean Water Act. However, there are some indications that a RA 7003 action might be appropriate. As you will note in the letter, the Missouri Department of Conservation feels this situation has created a severe environmental problem. Although St. Joseph Minerals Corporation, which placed the lead mine tailing in the Big River has deeded over the area to a St. Francis Environmental Corporation, recent actions filed against Hooker Chemicals and the Canal situation indicate that the government feels that it can sue the original party creating the hazard.

Attachment

Chet 6/20 Robbie

Dick Frankin, Dir, MDNR

Water Quality Program has the responsibility for assuring that these tailings do not get in the River. The landfill has not leaked and received a clean bill of health. It is 3/4 mile from the river. It has monitoring wells. Water in the piles is clean. Frankin has the data.

EPA Form 1320-6 (Rev. 3-76)

Memo to Martha 6-27-80 Kerry

Dr. Novak made several recommendations on stabilizing the pile to prevent further washout of tailings to the river. St. Joe Minerals Corporation had previously deeded the property to the county, which now operates a sanitary landfill at the location. I mentioned this situation to Ralph Langemeier for possible inclusion in the next State/EPA agreement.

A copy of the meeting agenda is attached and I can discuss with you any of the other agenda items which may be of interest.

ENFC CMPL DToensing sh x2576 2-25-80

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February 1, 1980

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SUBJECT

Erosion of Lead Mine Tailings into Big River, State of Missouri

FROM

Martha R Steincamp
ENFC-LEGL

MIRG

TO

David R Tripp
Chief, ENFC-LEGL

Attached hereto is a copy of a letter to Fred Lafser, Director, Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) from Larry R Gale, Director, Missouri Department of Conservation. The letter discusses a problem with lead mine tailing erosion into the Big River. The letter states that "the tailings have had extreme adverse affects on populations of fish and other aquatic life for a distance of 10 miles with incomplete recovery 25 miles downstream."

After reviewing this letter I do not feel that it is an appropriate Clean Water Act case, however, there are some indications that the RCRA 7003 action might be appropriate. I have not seen a copy of your letter to the Missouri Attorney General on this case. Do you know whether the Hazardous Materials Branch in Region VII is considering this case? Is the State of Missouri taking action on this case?

Attachment

Missouri Department Of Conservation

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Stamp -
please discuss
w me - I
have sent letter
to the Atty Genl

1979

August 13, 1979

Mr. Fred Lafser, Director
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
1014 Madison
P. O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Fred

I am sorry that you were unable to attend our meeting last Tuesday to discuss the erosion of lead mine tailings into Big River. It was a very good session and we were especially interested in the results which Dr. John Haven reported on the research contract which your Department awarded to the Civil Engineering Department at WAC. The following is a summation of our views of the tailings problem.

There was a catastrophic failure of the berm around the perimeter of the tailings deposit in the spring of 1977 following a very heavy rain. Local canoeist first discovered the tailings in the river and reported the problem to us. We have subsequently discussed the situation with representatives of your Department, the Missouri Clean Water Commission and St. Joe Mineral Corporation.

We initiated a study in the fall of 1977 to determine effects of tailings on Big River. This continuing study has demonstrated that the tailings have had extreme adverse effects on populations of fish and other aquatic life for a distance of 10 miles with incomplete recovery 25 miles downstream. The tailings are continuing to move downstream and are evident 25 miles or more below the point of entry into the river.

There has been additional inflow of tailings into Big River with each heavy rain. Erosion will continue until the erosion gorge is filled and the drainage system restored.

A decision was made in 1977 by the St. Francis Environmental Corporation (landfill authority) to start filling the gorge with demolition material such as stone, bricks, logs, and brush. We are unaware of when a decision was made to include other solid waste but on a field trip to the area I, John Commissioner Robert Aylward and some of our staff observed enormous amounts of tires of all sizes, plastic strips, rubber strips, cardboard and etc. which have been dumped into the erosion gorge. A large amount of this solid waste has washed into the river and into Big River at the

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mouth of the gorge. Tires, plastic, rubber, and other trash are visible in the river downstream for at least two miles, probably many more miles

A much smaller problem related to the lead mines in the Daslodge-Bonne Terre area can be easily resolved. This is the large number of iron pipes left in Big River in the 1930's following core drilling of the underlying ore body during mining. These are three-inch vertical pipes which extend into the solid rock formation below the bed of the stream. The drill holes then extend into the bedrock and also into the water in the mined area under the river. There are approximately 100 pipes in the river between Leadwood and the tailings pile. Several of the pipes are open with water flowing out under a considerable head of pressure, some 12 to 15 feet. The pipes are a hazard to canoeists and damage the aesthetics of this reach of stream. Mr John Kennedy of St. Joe Mineral Corporation has informed us that they would be willing to remove the pipes from the river if they are not required to grout the drill holes. We have analyzed the water flowing from some of the pipes and in our opinion, the quality of the mine water is such that discharge to the river would not result in any adverse effects on fish or other aquatic life. Since there are hundreds of drill holes into the mine which are not grouted and since there are many natural openings and many man-made openings between the surface and the mine water, grouting only the drill holes in the river would make little difference.

Our primary purpose in writing this letter is to offer our full support in the resolution of the problems on Big River and to make the following Recommendations:

- 1 The dumping of tires and other trash in the gorge should be stopped immediately since large amounts of solid waste dumped there will enter the river. We also request that the landfill authority be required to retrieve the tires and other waste which has washed and blown into the stream from the gorge and from their dump.
- 2 St Joe Mineral Corporation should be contacted again to request their cooperation and voluntary action to fill the gorge and restore the stability of the perimeter of the tailings deposit.
- 3 The necessary work to fill the gorge should begin as soon as possible after Dr Novak furnishes his report in October on alternative methods of solving the problem.
4. Methods of removal of tailings from the river should be explored. Possibly a low dam with periodic dredging of tailings which accumulate at the dam would be feasible.

Mr. Fred Laffer

August 13, 1979

5. We request removal of the abandoned iron pipes in the river between Leadwood and Desledge. St. Joe Minerals will do this immediately if it is approved by the proper authority in your Department.

Our research on the affected reach of Big River shows that this is the most damaging water pollution problem in the Meramec Basin. Severe damage to an otherwise high quality stream will continue to increase unless major corrective action is initiated. Again, I assure you that we will take every possible action to assist you in stopping this damage to Big River.

Sincerely,

LARRY R. GALE
DIRECTOR

cc: Mr. Aylward
Mr. Runge
Mr. Dunn
Dr. Camin, EPA
Dr. O'Connor, UMC
Dr. Novak, UMC
Mr. Hankin, DNR